

Rights of the Child

Declaration and Plan of Action on
the Rights of the Child
United Nations
Special Session 2002

Community of Christ
Independence, Missouri
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1 Put children first.



2 Wipe out poverty: invest in children.

3

Leave no child behind.



4

Care for every child.



5

Educate every child.



7

Protect children from war.



6

Protect children from harm and exploitation.



8

Combat HIV and AIDS.



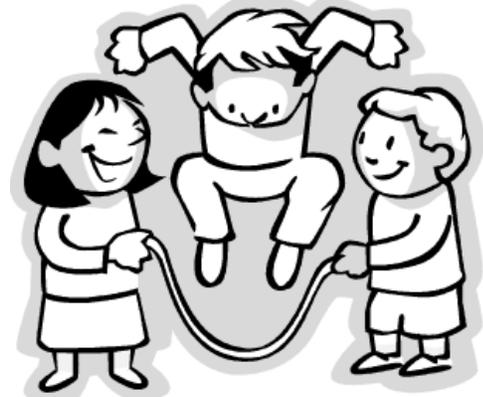
9

Listen to children, and be sure they participate.



10

Protect the Earth for children.



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To the Teacher

This coloring page is to make kids aware of their rights and to sensitize them to the needs of other children in the world. Photocopy one coloring sheet for each child. As they color it, read aloud the information (written from the child's perspective) on each Right. Kids may display their posters in the congregation, and a copy of this page may be included with the display. With the reading of each Right, discuss how kids feel about that Right, and if it is being fulfilled at home, in the church, and in their school. Discuss: Which Right do you think is the most important? What can you do to ensure the Rights for yourself and others? What does our church do to make sure you have rights?

"Convention on the Rights of the Child" is a universally agreed set of standards that places children first in a just, nurturing, and peaceful society. This declaration was first agreed to in November 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly and revised in the 2002 Special Session. It is the most widely adopted international human rights treaty in history.

"The desire for our children's well-being has always been the most universally cherished aspiration of [humankind]." —*Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the United Nations*

The Convention protects these rights by setting standards in health care and education, as well as legal, civil, and social services. Countries that ratify the Convention are required to keep the best interests of the child in mind in their actions and policies.

The Community of Christ upholds the rights of children. World Conference actions and ministries have advocated for children's rights, inclusiveness, training, and protection from abuse through the creation of congregational child advocates, and the selection and screening of certified youth workers. The World Church calendar features Children's Sabbath, affirming the rights of children through the work of congregations to "leave no child behind."*

* motto of the Children's Defense Fund

5 **E**ducate every child. All kids should be able to go to school. Our education should teach us to live together with respect and peace. Our schooling should be free, required until a certain age, and of good quality, open to boys and girls equally. It should include activities like art, drama, music, and sports.

6 **P**rotect children from harm and exploitation. Kids should be looked after. This means we should be protected from all kinds of abuse and violence. We should be protected from using or selling drugs and from being kidnapped or sold. If we choose to work, we should have safe conditions to work in. If we have committed a crime, we should be given a fair and quick trial in a juvenile court, and not sentenced for life or to death.

7 **P**rotect children from war. Kids must be protected from war and not be made to serve as soldiers. If we become refugees, we should be given special protection and care.

8 **C**ombat HIV and AIDS. Kids must be protected from HIV/AIDS. When our families get HIV/AIDS, we are often left homeless, parentless, and end up in orphanages.

9 **L**isten to children, and be sure they participate. Kids are capable of helping to build a better future for everyone. We have opinions and a right to express ourselves and should be able to take part in making decisions about things that affect us, according to our age. Because we are aware of our rights, we can take responsibility to do our part, too.

10 **P**rotect the Earth for children. Our natural environment, with its diversity of life, its beauty, and its resources, must be kept safe for us and for future generations. The wise use of our land and resources should be our stewardship.

1 **P**ut children first. In all actions related to children, if adults remember what would be in our best interests, then we will be loved and cared for and guided and we will grow properly. If we are not looked after by our parents and families, it should be done by the communities that we live in and our government.

2 **W**ipe out poverty: invest in children. We want poverty to go away within a single generation. If you uphold our rights, then the rights of everyone else will be upheld, and that will wipe out poverty. We also need you to make a difference immediately to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

3 **L**eave no child behind. Each girl and boy is born free and equal. Our rights are the same for kids everywhere, no matter who we are, where we live, what language we speak, what culture and religion we follow, if we are disabled, or if we are a boy or a girl. We may all be different, but we are all equal.

4 **C**are for every child. If we get sick or are hurt, we should be seen by good doctors and treated so we can get well. We should have vaccinations to protect us from disease. We need nutritious food, clean water, and a safe environment to grow up in. Kids must get the best possible start in life. If we are disabled, we should be given special care and treatment.